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1. Wolfgang Paul, a young German, wrote a requiem which the composer Brantow set to music. Its theme is the destruction of Dresden from the air which is followed by a requiem of peace. The Russians were much interested in the requiem which was to be performed by the Dresden Philharmonic and broadcast over the Leipzig radio and the entire Soviet controlled radio net. RIAS and the Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk had offered to broadcast it over their stations.
2. A week prior to the planned performance, Paul was called to the Soviet Office for Cultural Affairs and was asked to make some basic changes. He was told that the finale should be an accusation against the destroyers of culture, the oppressors of mankind, who, from the air, shower phosphorus and sulphur on women and children. When Paul countered that a work of art once finished could not be altered just to suit a certain tendency, he was cautioned that the work could not be broadcast in its present form. Three days later, Paul was informed that the performance, as well as the broadcast, had been cancelled, and that severe reprisals would be taken if the work were broadcast over another station.
3. Soon after this incident, the "Kulturverband" held a meeting in collaboration with the Cultural Department of the SED, at which Anton Ackermann of the SED Executive Committee announced that "cultural sanctions" would be applied against any person in the field of culture, who, through uncalled for phantasies, tried to sabotage the economic two-year plan. All authors, actors, artists, publishers, etc., registered in the Russian Zone, were told in so-called open town meetings, which, however, had been arranged by SED functionaries, that the Eastern Zone is the battle ground for the whole of Germany, that it is their duty to lead the struggle in the coming months and to present to the world at large the soul of the Soviet Zone, i.e. of progressive Germany, by their creative work. It was, for this reason necessary, said Ackermann, that all cultural activities in the Soviet Zone be more closely supervised, that the zone become self-sufficient, and that it take its lead mainly from the East. All efforts to make contacts with the western zones of Germany or the western countries will be regarded as obstructing or undermining the work of the Soviet Zone and corresponding action will be taken against the offenders. The Soviet Zone, Ackermann said, is aware of her debt to persons working creatively, and is willing to reward those who have given themselves entirely to this service, but it must be understood that "creative work" does not mean idleness caused by Russian food packages.

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